

1                   Abstract of the Invention

2           A system for a universal network configuration  
3 engine includes a client machine which interfaces to  
4 an extensible library of data about network elements,  
5 such as routers, switches, hubs and other devices.  
6 The elements may be made by diverse manufacturers and  
7 use different protocols. However, a unified user  
8 interface on the client permits a network  
9 administrator to access, update, configure and  
10 otherwise manipulate the network elements of a new or  
11 existing network, using a single tool which abstracts  
12 the hardware and software interfaces, for instance  
13 using object oriented code. The client may have a  
14 port to the physical or virtual network being  
15 configured, for hot testing or other purposes.